

ABSTRACT

A videoconferencing system has multiple conferencing stations. Each conferencing station has audio output apparatus, audio and video compression
5 modules for receiving video from the video source and audio from the audio capture circuitry and for transmitting compressed audio and video through a network. Each station compresses audio from its audio capture circuitry and, when this audio has amplitude above a threshold, transmits the compressed audio to a server. The server combines compressed audio streams into a single composite stream without
10 decompressing and mixing the audio streams, and broadcasts this potentially multichannel stream to each conferencing station.. Each conferencing station also has an audio mixer module for receiving the composite compressed audio stream through the network interface apparatus from the server, for decompressing and mixing channels of interest in the audio streams, and for providing audio to the audio output
15 apparatus.